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Testimony for the House Urban Policy Committee on HB 6164 and HB 6165 on June 1, 2010
Chairman Leland and Committee Members, thanks for letting me testify.

As some of you know from other Committees, I speak for the National Motorists Association, a grass roots organization that seeks fairness for all motorists, and traffic laws based on science.

In 2006, the Legislature enacted Public Law 85 that became effective November 9, 2006. This law revised the Motor Vehicle Code to maximize safety and require posted speed limits to be based on sound traffic safety engineering principles by using either 85th percentile speed studies or access point counts which make the posted limit proportional to road development. The law was also intended to make posted limits on similar roads uniform around the state.

If the posted limit is set so 85% of the free flowing traffic under good conditions is below or right at the posted limit, this usually yields the lowest crash rate and the smoothest traffic flow. If anyone needs more information on this, please see www.michigan.gov/speedlimits for a copy of "Establishing Realistic Speed Limits", a booklet published by the State Police.

PA 85 was supported by the Michigan State Police, the National Motorists Association, and others concerned that arbitrarily low posted speed limits not based on traffic safety engineering science and sound engineering principles do not promote safety and can cause more crashes.

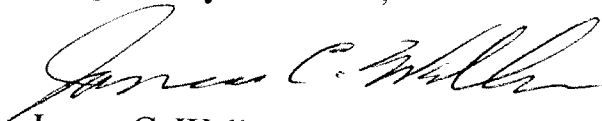
Some communities like Chelsea complied and revised many of their posted speed limits to comply with the new state law, as stated by their Chief of Police in an interview on 5/24/07.

Some however, like Ann Arbor, simply defied the new state law and continued to set arbitrary posted speed limits that are not based on sound engineering principles. A city engineer said in June 2007 he did not intend to do any 85th percentile speed studies. The city attorney said in August 2008 that the city did not use either 85th percentile speeds or access points to set limits.

House Bills 6164 and 6165 clarify that all venues in the state are required to set posted speed limits conforming to state law and sound traffic safety engineering principles.

I urge the Committee to move these bills as written, and I will be happy to answer questions.

Respectfully submitted,



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